Seeds of Forest Trees.

It is probably always best to purchase forest trees from nursery men that make a business of producing them from seed. But sometimes this is not convenient or advisable, both by reason of the number required and of the distance of the nursery from which the same might be obtainable. For instance there are some farmers that have bare hill tops that they wish to cover with trees for the protection of the land. They know that the tree that is to be good for lumber must be one that grows largely without branches and that therefore a large number of trees must be started per acre, most of which will be killed off by the shade of their neighbors. No man likes to pay for trees and go to the work of planting them and then have most of them die natural deaths. So the only way when a large plantation is to be put in is to buy the seeds by the pound if they can be obtained or gather the seeds from the woods. In thousands of instances the latter will be the plan that will appeal most to the farmer. Such seeds should be gathered as soon as ripe. If they are left till they fall to the ground it will be difficult to get the desired quantities, and often, too, the over-ripe seeds will not grow at all. The seeds that fall are also eaten to a great extent by various small animals, such as mice and squirrels. The seeds are also more easily gathered from the trees than from the ground, if they are left on the latter place for some weeks, and the difficulty of picking them up as soon as they fall naturally is that they do not fall at one time, but frequently take a period of weeks to mature fully enough to detach themselves from the woody stems.

The seeds that mature in the early part of the summer should be sown as soon as gathered, as that is the way that nature does it. If such seeds are left till the next spring they will not grow at all. The keeping of such seeds is one of the mistakes frequently made by amateurs. For the late-maturing seeds the keeping till spring before planting is the natural and proper thing to do. Seeds with soft shells should be carefully stored, but those with hard shells may be planted at once or put in a box buried in the ground, so they may be affected by the frosts of winter, which are necessary to break the shells. When seeds are planted they should be covered with at least three inches of soil, especially if they are planted in the fall.

Horticulture in New Brunswick

The New Brunswick government is encouraging the fruit industry of that country in a very practical way. It has undertaken to furnish the trees for the planting of four or five model orchards, mostly winter apples, and a man will be sent to direct the planting and laying out of the orchard. After the trees are set the owner is required to sign an agreement to care for the orchard for ten years in accordance with the instructions of the Department of Agriculture, he to have the product of same. These model orchards will not exceed two acres and it is planned to eventually have one in every county.

Japanese Plums.

According to a report of the Ontario station the Japanese plums are proving successful as far north as Georgian bay. Experts declare that the northern line of the successful growing of Japanese plums runs from northeast to southwest. West of Lake Michigan it begins at about the vicinity of Chicago, slanting in the direction named. This will show why Japanese plums have been so seldom profitable in Northern Illinois.

Adapting Corn Varieties.

We are always learning something new about the corn plant. One thing, new at least to a good many students of the corn plant, is that corn varieties differ so greatly in their characteristics that success or failure with corn depends on the selection of the right varieties for certain fields. It is not unusual to hear of a man declaring that the variety of corn he grows is one of the most profitable in the world and will give most astonishing yields. The fact is that he is growing it on a location that is admirably suited to it. We are now coming to have varieties of corn adapted to uplands and to lowlands. The lowland variety may do very well on the upland in a wet year, but in a dry year proves almost a failure, while the variety adapted to the upland yields well even in bad seasons. At the present time this differentiation is only beginning to be made. During this summer corn growers would do well to watch the behavior of corn on lowlands and uplands. At the present time we have only very meager data by which to figure out what kind of corn a man should select for the bottom lands and what kind for the uplands. Some of our experimenters are only now just beginning to study the corn plant from this standpoint. We have, however, much to hope for from our agricultural colleges in this matter. The students are taking great interest in such matters and are taking up every phase of corn growing. This study of varieties is one that may well engross the attention of some of the brightest minds.

Green Manure.

Green manure is the name applied to a crop that is grown for the purpose of being turned under. Some of the lands that are exhausted to such an extent that they will not bear good crops of grain yet will be found growing up to some kind of weeds. Sometimes this weed crop is the best thing that can be grown on the land, if the farmer is smart enough to turn it under. It adds humus to the soil. We have heard of fields that were practically good for nothing, yet were reclaimed by having the weeds plowed under for three or more years. The fact was that the fields were deficient in humus and nitrogen and needed an application of both of these, which they got in the green manures given in the form of the turned under weeds.

The best green manure in most parts of the North is the clover plant. But cow peas and soy beans are excellent where they can be grown. All kinds of legumes are very good for turning under, as they always add nitrogen to the soil. Rye and such things are sometimes used, but they add little or nothing to the soil except fiber, which is not taken up by the roots of the growing plants. It may, however, do some good to the soil mechanically.

Question of Speed.

The general farmer has little or no interest in the trotting horse except in so far as he may be used to cross on slower horses to give their progeny enough speed to make them useful as carriage horses. The farmer cannot afford to waste his time trying to develop trotters. The trotting horse is not a farm horse, as his great speed can be of no use except as a means of gambling. Who wants to drive a carriage horse at the rate of a mile in two minutes? What we do want in horses for the farm is the speed that appears in the walking gait. If our fair managers wanted to really improve the speed of farm horses they could establish contests in walking.

See that the waste land is cleared up and put into service.